Expansion of handicraft sector

4379. PROF. M.M. AGARWAL: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal for expansion of handicraft sector in the different parts of the country;

(b) if so, the details of programmes that have been formulated so far alongwith the financial allocation to be made in this regard during the year 2001-2002; and

(c) the steps being taken or proposed to be taken by Government in this direction?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI V. DHANANJAY KUMAR): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. For expansion of handicrafts in the country, the programmes formulated include: launching of Baba Saheb Ambedkar Hastshilp Vikas Yojana (AMVY) for developing artisan clusters; launching of website on handicrafts; setting up of a National Center for design and product development at New Delhi and Moradabad and setting up of Indian Institute of Carpet Technology at Bhadohi. Besides, the existing schemes for promotion and development of handicrafts in the areas of training, design development, setting up of crafts development centres/common facility center; exhibition and publicity, workshed-cum-housing and marketing development are further being strengthened.

A sum of Rs. 79.00 crores has been allocated by the Government during the current financial year i.e. 2001-2002 for promotion and development of handicrafts in the country.

Suicide by cotton growers in A.P.

4380. DR. Y. LAKSHMI PRASAD: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether reports of suicides by cotton growers of Andhra Pradesh have been reported; and

(b) if so, the steps taken to ban import of cotton and explore the possibilities of more exports of cotton to help farmers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI V. DHANANJAY KUMAR): (a) No such report of suicide by the cotton growers in the State of Andhra Pradesh has been received in this Ministry.

(b) The cotton EXIM Policy has been framed keeping in view the interests of cotton growers as well as the user industry which provides a price stabilization mechanism. Government announces quota for exports of cotton in the beginning of every cotton year. Imports of cotton is under OGL to facilitate the availability of cotton of desired quality parameters. Largely, export and import of cotton depend on quality, price and other considerations. The Minimum Support Price (MSP) is also in vogue to ensure reasonable returns to the cotton growers. Technology Mission on Cotton is under operation to incentivise the research and development, dissemination of technology to cotton farmers, improvement in market infrastructure and modernisation of ginning & pressing sector for overall increase in the productivity and quality of cotton while ensuring better returns to the cotton growers and availability of better quality of cotton to the industry.

Ambedkar Handicraft Development Scheme

†4381. PROF. R.B.S. VARMA: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have started an "Ambedkar Handicraft Development Scheme";

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) what are the main objectives of this scheme; and

(d) the amount allocated for implementation of this scheme?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI V. DHANANJAY KUMAR): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. 'The Baba Saheb Ambedkar Hastshilp Vikas Yojana' has recently been launched which aims at promoting Indian handicrafts

†Original notice of the Question was received in Hindi.